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A

POETICAL, SUPPLICATING, MODEST,

AND

AFFECTING EPISTLE

TO THOSE

LITERARY *COLOSSUSES*,

THE

REVIEWERS,

By PETER PINDAR, Esq.

A NEW EDITION.

Carmine, Dî Superi placantur, Carmine, Manes.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR G. KEARSLEY, No. 46, FLEET-STREET.

M,DCC,LXXXVII.

ENTERED AT STATIONER'S-HALL.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

TO THE

REVIEWERS.

FATHERS of Wiſdom—a poor wight befriend!
O hear my ſimple prayer in ſimple lays:
In *formâ pauperis* behold I bend,
And of your Worſhips aſk a little praiſe.

I am no cormorant for fame, d'ye ſee;
I aſk not *all* the laurel, but a *ſprig!*
Then hear me, Guardians of the ſacred Tree,
And ſtick a leaf or two about my wig.

In ſonnet, ode, and Legendary tale,
Soon will the preſs my tuneful works diſplay;
Then do not damn 'em, and prevent the ſale;
And your petitioner ſhall ever pray.

My labours damn'd, the Muſe with grief will groan—
The cenſure dire my lantern jaws will rue!
Know I have teeth and ſtomach like your own,
And that I wiſh to *eat* as well as you.

I never ſaid, like murderers in their dens,
You ſecret met in cloud-capp'd garret high,
With hatchets, ſcalping knives in ſhape of pens,
To bid, like Mohocks, hapleſs authors die:

Nor ſaid, (in your Reviews, together ſtrung)
The limbs of butcher'd writers, cheek by jowl,
Look'd like the legs of flies on cobwebs hung
Before the hungry ſpider's dreary hole.

I ne'er declared that frightful as the Blacks,
In greaſy flannel caps you met together,
With ſcarce a rag of ſhirt about your backs,
Or coat or breeches to keep out the weather.

Heav'n knows I'm innocent of all tranſgreſſion
Againſt your honours, men of claſſic fame!
I ne'er abus'd your critical profeſſion,
Whoſe *dictum* ſaves at once or damns a name.

I never queſtion'd your profound of head,
Nor *vulgar*, call'd your wit, your manners *coarſe*;
Nor ſwore on butcher'd authors that you fed
Like carrion crows upon a poor dead horſe.

I never ſaid, that pedlar like, you ſold
Praiſe by the ounce, or pound, like ſnuff or cheeſe;
Too well I knew you ſilver ſcorn'd and gold—
Such droſs, a ſage Reviewer ſeldom ſees!

I never hinted that with half a crown
Books have been ſent you by the ſcribling tribe;
Which fee hath purchas'd pages of renown:
No, for I knew you'd ſpurn the *paltry* bribe.

I ne'er averr'd, you critics to a man,
For pence, would ſwear an owl excell'd the lark;
Nor call'd a coward gang, your grave divan,
That ſtabb'd, like baſe aſſaſſins, in the dark.

I never prais'd, or blam'd, an author's book,
Until your wiſe opinions came abroad;
On theſe with holy rev'rence did I look;
With you I prais'd, or blam'd, ſo help me G—d!

The fam'd Longinus all the world muſt know:
The gape of wonder Ariſtarcus drew,
As well as Alexander's tutor, lo!
Alt! all great critics, gentlemen, like *you*.

Did any aſk me, "pray, Sir, your opinion
" Of thoſe Reviewers, who ſo bold beſtride
" The world of learning, and with proud dominion,
" High on the backs of crouching authors ride?"

Quick have I anſwer'd, in a rage, "odſblood!
" No works like theirs ſuch criticiſm convey:
" Not all the timber of Dodona's wood
" E'er pour'd more ſterling oracle than *they*."

Did others cry "whate'er their brains indite,
Beſure is excellent, a partial crew!
With Iö Pæans uſher'd to the light,
And prais'd to folly in the next Review:"

This was my anſwer, to each ſnarling elf,
(My eyeballs fill'd with fire, my mouth with foam)
" Zounds! is not juſtice due to one's dear ſelf?
And ſhould not charity begin at home?"

Full often I've been queſtion'd with a ſneer—
" Think you one could not bribe 'em?" " Not a Nation."
" A beef-ſteak, with a pot or two of beer,
" Might ſave a little volume from damnation."

Furious I've anſwer'd " lo! my Lord Carliſle
" Hath begg'd, in vain, a ſeat in Fame's old temple;
" Tho' *you* applaud, their wiſdoms will not ſmile,
" And what they diſapprove is curſed ſimple.

" Could gold ſucceed, enough the peer might raiſe,
" Whoſe wealth would buy the critics o'er and o'er:
" 'Tis merit only can command their praiſe,
" Witneſs the volumes of Miſs Hannah More.*

" The *Search for Happineſs*, that beauteous ſong,
" Which all of us would give our ears to own;
" The *Captive*, *Percy*, that like muſtard ſtrong,
" Make our eyes weep, and underſtandings †groan."

* A Lady talked of for her poetical Productions, and emphatically called by a certain Claſs of Readers, the tenth Muſe.

† A pair of Tragedies.

Hail Briſtol town! Bœotia now no more,
Since Garrick's Sappho ſings, tho' rather ſlowly.
All hail Miſs Hannah! worth at leaſt a ſcore,
Ay twenty ſcore of Chatterton and Rowley.

Men of prodigious parts are moſtly ſhy;
Great Newton's ſelf this failing did inherit;
Thus, frequent, *you* avoid the public eye,
And hide, in lurking holes, a world of merit.

Yet oft your cautious modeſties I ſee,
When from your bow'r with bats you wing the dark:
And Sundays, when no catchpoles prowl for prey,
On æther, dining in St. James's-Park.

Meek Sirs! in frays you chooſe not to appear,
A circumſtance moſt natural to ſuppoſe,
And therefore hide your precious heads, for fear
Some angry bard abuſed ſhould pull your noſe.

The world's loud plaudit, lo! you don't deſire,
Nor do you haſtily on books decide;
But firſt at ev'ry coffee-houſe enquire,
How, in its favour, runs the public tide.

There, Wiſdom, often with a critic's wig,
The face demure, knit brows, and forehead ſcowling,
I've ſeen o'er pamphlets, with importance big,
Mouſing for faults, or if you'll have it, *owling*.

Herculean gentlemen! I dread your drubs;
Pity the lifted whites of both my eyes!
Strung with new ſtrength beneath your maſſy clubs,
Alas! I ſhall not an Antæus riſe.

Lo, like an elephant along the ground,
Great Caliban, the giant Johnſon ſtretcht!
The Britiſh Roſcius too your clubs confound,
Whoſe fame the furtheſt of the ſtars hath reach'd.

If ſuch ſo eaſy ſink beneath your might,
Ye Gods! I may be done for in a trice:
Hurl'd by your rage to everlaſting night—
Crack'd with that eaſe a beggar cracks his lice.

If, awful Sirs, you grant me my petition;
With brother pamphlets ſhall my pamphlet ſhine;
And ſhould it chance to paſs a firſt edition,
In capitals ſhall ſtare your praiſe divine.

Quote from my work as much as e'er you pleaſe
For Extracts, lo! I'll put no angy face on;
Nor fill a hungry lawyer's fiſt with fees,
To trounce a Bookſeller like furious Maſon.*

Sage Sirs! if favour in your ſight I find,
If fame you grant, I'll bleſs each gen'rous giver:
Wiſh you ſound coats, good ſtomachs, maſters kind,†
Gallons of broth, and pounds of bullocks liver.

* The Conteſt between Mr. Maſon and a Bookſeller is generally known.

† The Bookſellers.

THE END.